

into the United States should be denied to former and current corrupt public officials and their families: Now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) calls upon the Government of Cambodia to immediately and unconditionally release Cheam Channy;

(2) calls upon the Cambodian National Assembly to reverse its recent action to strip the immunity of opposition parliamentarians Sam Rainsy, Cheam Channy, and Chea Poch;

(3) urges the Secretary of State, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, international financial institutions, and democracies around the world to continue to publicly and forcefully condemn the Cambodian National Assembly vote;

(4) urges international donors to consider imposing appropriate sanctions against the National Assembly and the Government of Cambodia unless and until it reverses its recent action;

(5) calls upon the Secretary of State to impose visa restrictions on members of the Cambodian National Assembly and their families who voted to strip the immunity of Sam Rainsy, Cheam Channy, and Chea Pok, consistent with the President's Proclamation of January 12, 2004, regarding the denial of visas to corrupt public officials and their families; and

(6) calls upon Prime Minister Hun Sen and Cambodian National Assembly President Norodom Ranariddh to cease and desist their efforts to undermine democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Cambodia.

SENATE RESOLUTION 66—URGING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC TO ENSURE A DEMOCRATIC, TRANSPARENT, AND FAIR PROCESS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 27, 2005

Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. BIDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 66

Whereas on August 31, 1991, the Kyrgyz Republic declared independence from the Soviet Union;

Whereas the Kyrgyz Republic has been ruled by a single President since gaining independence in 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union;

Whereas President Askar Akaev's initial years of power were marked by numerous democratic reforms, including the establishment of independent media and opposition party representation in a bi-cameral parliament;

Whereas in recent years, these democratic reforms have been scaled back or eliminated;

Whereas today in the Kyrgyz Republic, virtually all major television outlets are controlled or influenced by the President's family or the state;

Whereas the political system of the Kyrgyz Republic has been characterized by the Department of State as marred by "serious irregularities" and its human rights record has been described by the Department of State as "poor";

Whereas in 2002, Government forces shot 4 opposition demonstrators in the southern Aksy region;

Whereas in 2003, President Akaev called for a referendum, with little notice, on a group of Constitutional amendments, leaving both voters and the opposition unprepared to effectively participate in the vote;

Whereas the 2003 referendum vote on the Constitutional amendments was not transparent and contained numerous instances of fraud;

Whereas a genuinely free and fair democratic election requires a period of political campaigning in an environment in which administrative action, violence, intimidation, and detention do not hinder the parties, political associations, or the candidates from presenting their views and qualifications to the citizenry;

Whereas unimpeded access to television, radio, print, and Internet media on a non-discriminatory basis is fundamental to a genuinely free and fair democratic election;

Whereas a genuinely free and fair election requires that all eligible citizens be guaranteed the right and effective opportunity to exercise their civil and political rights, including the right to vote, and the right to seek and acquire information upon which to make an informed vote, free from intimidation, undue influence, attempts at vote buying, threats of political retribution, or other forms of coercion;

Whereas the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, as a participating state in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), has accepted numerous specific commitments governing the conduct of elections, including the provisions of the Copenhagen Document;

Whereas reports indicate that authorities within the Kyrgyz government have stepped up repressive activities ahead of the parliamentary elections scheduled for February 27, 2005, including unfairly excluding opposition candidates from running for office, launching new restrictions on freedom of assembly, harassing opposition supporters and civil society activists, publicly warning against a "Ukraine scenario", and attempting to equate political opposition with subversion; and

Whereas the parliamentary elections scheduled for February 27, 2005, will provide an unambiguous test of the extent of the commitment of the Kyrgyz authorities to implementing democratic reforms and building a society based on free elections and the rule of law;

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges and welcomes the strong relationship formed between the United States and the Kyrgyz Republic since the restoration of independence in 1991;

(2) expresses its strong and continuing support for the efforts of the Kyrgyz people to establish a full democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights in the Kyrgyz Republic;

(3) urges the Kyrgyz Republic to meet its Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe commitments on democratic elections; and

(4) urges the Kyrgyz authorities to ensure—

(A) the full transparency of election procedures before, during, and after the 2005 parliamentary elections;

(B) the right to vote for all eligible citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic;

(C) unimpeded access by all parties and candidates to print, radio, television, and Internet media on a non-discriminatory basis; and

(D) the right of opposition parties and candidates to assemble freely, campaign openly, and contest the upcoming elections on an equal basis as all other parties, including the party currently in control of the Parliament.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE CONTINUED PARTICIPATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION IN THE GROUP OF 8 NATIONS SHOULD BE CONDITIONED ON THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT VOLUNTARILY ACCEPTING AND ADHERING TO THE NORMS AND STANDARDS OF DEMOCRACY

Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. BURNS, Mr. BAYH, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. SMITH, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 14

Whereas the countries that comprise the Group of 7 nations are pluralistic societies with democratic political institutions and practices, committed to the observance of universally recognized standards of human rights, respect for individual liberties, and democratic principles;

Whereas in 1991 and subsequent years, the leaders of the Group of 7 nations, heads of the governments of the major free market economies of the world who meet annually in a summit meeting, invited then-Russian President Boris Yeltsin to a post-summit dialogue;

Whereas in 1998, the leaders of the Group of 7 nations formally invited President Boris Yeltsin of Russia to participate in an annual gathering that subsequently was known as the Group of 8 nations, although the Group of 7 nations have continued to hold informal summit meetings and ministerial meetings that do not include the Russian Federation;

Whereas the invitation to President Yeltsin to participate in the annual summits was in recognition of his commitment to democratization and economic liberalization, despite the fact that the Russian economy remained weak and the commitment of the Russian Government to democratic principles was uncertain;

Whereas under the leadership of President Vladimir Putin, the Russian Government has attempted to control the activities of independent media enterprises, nongovernmental organizations, religious organizations, and other pluralistic elements of Russian society in an attempt to mute criticism of the government;

Whereas under the leadership of President Putin, the Russian Government has suppressed the activities of independent journalists, international observers, and human rights monitoring organizations, and has blocked the renewal of the mandate of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to operate inside Chechnya in an attempt to block public scrutiny of the war in Chechnya;

Whereas the suppression by the Russian Government of independent media enterprises has resulted in widespread government control and influence over the media in Russia, stifling freedom of expression and individual liberties that are essential to any functioning democracy;

Whereas the arrest and prosecution of prominent Russian business leaders who had supported the political opposition to President Putin are examples of selective application of the rule of law for political purposes;

Whereas the courts of the United States, the United Kingdom, Spain, and Greece have consistently ruled against extradition warrants issued by the Russian Government after finding that the cases presented by the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation have been inherently political in nature;

Whereas Russian military forces continue to commit brutal atrocities against the civilian population in Chechnya and have been implicated in abductions of Chechen civilians who filed cases before the European Court of Human Rights;

Whereas leaders of the Group of 7 nations have repeatedly expressed that a military solution in Chechnya is not possible;

Whereas in the aftermath of the tragic siege of School No. 1 in Beslan, Russia that occurred during September 2004, which was an act of terrorism abhorrent to all civilized people, President Putin cited violence in the North Caucasus as a pretext for consolidating centralized power and proposed to abolish the popular election of regional governors in favor of presidential appointment of such officials;

Whereas the catastrophic consequences of the siege of School No. 1 in Beslan and of the continued violence in Chechnya demonstrate the need to search for political solutions and to commence negotiations between the Government of Russia and moderate Chechen separatists, giving moderates credence over extremist elements;

Whereas the Government of Russia initially supported the undemocratic results of the November 21, 2004, runoff in the Ukrainian presidential election, in spite of widespread election fraud and mass demonstrations in support of a new, legitimate election, which raised concerns among the Group of 7 nations that the commitment of the Government of Russia to democratic standards is waning;

Whereas a wide range of observers at think tanks and nongovernmental organizations have expressed deep concern that the Russian Federation is moving away from the political and legal underpinnings of a market economy and have identified the continuing war in Chechnya as a major threat to stability and democracy in Russia; and

Whereas the continued participation of the Russian Federation in the Group of 8 nations, including the opportunity for the Russian Government to host the Group of 8 nations in 2006 as planned, is a privilege that is premised on the Government of Russia voluntarily accepting and adhering to the norms and standards of democracy, including governmental accountability, transparency, and the rule of law: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the selective prosecution of political opponents and the suppression of free media by the Russian Federation, and the continued commission of widespread atrocities in the conduct of the brutal war in Chechnya, do not reflect the minimum standards of democratic governance and rule of law that characterize every other member state in the Group of 8 nations;

(2) the continued participation of the Russian Federation in the Group of 8 nations, including the opportunity for the Russian Government to host the Group of 8 nations summit in 2006 as planned, should be conditioned on the Russian Government accepting and adhering to the norms and standards of free, democratic societies as generally practiced by every other member nation of the Group of 8 nations, including—

(A) the rule of law, including protection from selective prosecution and protection from arbitrary state-directed violence;

(B) a court system free of political influence and manipulation;

(C) a free and independent media;

(D) a political system open to participation by all citizens and which protects freedom of expression and association; and

(E) the protection of universally recognized human rights; and

(3) the President and the Secretary of State should work with the other members of the Group of 7 nations to take all necessary steps to suspend the participation of the Russian Federation in the Group of 8 nations until the President, after consultation with the other members of the Group of 7 nations, determines and reports to Congress that the Russian Government is committed to respecting and upholding the democratic principles described in paragraph (2).

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 17, 2005, at 9:30 a.m., in open session to receive testimony on the Defense authorization request for fiscal year 2006 and future years defense program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 17, 2005, at 10 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to consider the nomination of Daniel R. Levinson, to be Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC; Harold Damelin, to be Inspector General, Department of the Treasury, Washington, DC; and Raymond Wagner, Jr., to be a Member of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board, Washington, DC.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 17, 2004, at 9:30 a.m. to hold a hearing on Russia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to hold a hearing during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 17, 2005, at 10 a.m., in SD-430.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a markup on Thursday, February 17, 2005, at 9:30 a.m., in Senate Dirksen Office Building Room 226.

I. Legislation: S. 256, A bill to Amend Title 11 of the United States Code, and for Other Purposes Act of 2005, [Grassley, Hatch, Sessions]

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate for a hearing entitled, "The President's Fiscal Year 2006 Budget Request for the SBA" on Thursday, February 17, 2005, beginning at 10 a.m., in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 17, 2005, at 2:30 p.m., to hold a closed hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on National Parks be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 17, at 2:30 p.m. to review the National Park Service's implementation of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act authorized in Public Law 108-447.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, THE FEDERAL WORK FORCE, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia be authorized to meet on Thursday, February 17, 2005, at 10 a.m. for a hearing entitled, "Programs in Peril: An Overview of the GAO High-Risk List."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 256

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Monday, February 28, at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. 256, the bankruptcy reform bill, provided that consideration of the bill during Monday's session be for the purpose of debate only.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURR). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE TWO HOUSES

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of H.